

# CONTACT-INDUCED LANGUAGE CHANGE IN MINORITY LANGUAGES: THE CASE OF DIMINUTIVES IN FRANCOPROVENÇAL VARIETIES OF APULIA\*

CARMELA PERTA, LUCA IEZZI, VALERIO PISANIELLO  
UNIVERSITÀ “G. D’ANNUNZIO” CHIETI – PESCARA  
cperta@unich.it, luca.iezzi@unich.it, valerio.pisaniello@unich.it

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Apulian Francoprovençal, spoken in Faeto and Celle di San Vito, is a minority language that is particularly suitable for studying language contact phenomena due to its close contact with Italo-Romance varieties since medieval times. In this paper, we will focus on evaluative morphology, specifically on diminutives, an area of grammar that has received particular attention in the last few decades, although not many studies have been devoted to it from a language contact perspective. After a brief theoretical introduction, we will try to outline the diachronic development of Apulian Francoprovençal diminutives from the earliest documentation available up to the present day, and we will provide an analysis of data collected by us through questionnaires and elicitation tasks, in order to assess whether and to what extent Italo-Romance varieties (including Italian) had an impact on this area of Apulian Francoprovençal morphology.

*Keywords:* Apulian Francoprovençal, Diminutives, Language Contact

## 1. *Contact-induced language change and minority languages: challenges in Apulian Francoprovençal*

Historical minority languages spoken in Italy constitute a valuable testing ground for theories and models of language contact, and in many respects pose significant challenges to the identification of processes underlying linguistic change. This latter issue is particularly relevant in the case of minority languages that can be classified as *Abstandssprachen* (Kloss 1967), which still lack a standardized reference model and remain generally underdeveloped in terms of codification and functional elaboration. A representative case is Francoprovençal, a set of Gallo-Romance varieties spoken in Aosta Valley, in Piedmont, and in two villages in Apulia. While they exhibit certain common features, each Francoprovençal variety spoken in Italy is structurally distinct to such an extent that the notion of a unified

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linguistic identity remains highly problematic. As a result, the absence of a standardized model, in some cases coupled with the scarcity of written documentation related to the past, complicates at least two major areas of inquiry. Firstly, it makes it difficult, if not impossible, to determine the extent to which a given variety has changed over time due to pervasive and long-standing contact with surrounding Romance varieties. Secondly, it significantly hampers the diachronic reconstruction of specific linguistic features, thereby limiting our ability to trace their historical development with any degree of precision.

This work aims to describe, from a variationist perspective, aspects of evaluative morphology in the Francoprovençal variety spoken in Apulia, specifically in the towns of Faeto and Celle di San Vito, in order to examine how evaluative morphology has been reshaped through contact with Italian and Apulian dialects, both at the level of form and in terms of productivity. To this end, the study will examine the role of evaluative morphology in language contact contexts, followed by a sociolinguistic overview of the minority language under investigation. Subsequently, it will present an analysis of evaluative morphological features in Apulian Francoprovençal, with particular attention to the use of diminutives as documented in grammatical descriptions from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, data will be presented concerning the use of evaluative morphology by bilingual speakers. The analysis focuses on the ways in which contact with Italian and Apulian dialects has shaped the evaluative morphological system, with particular attention to the diachronic developments that reflect broader contact-induced changes within the Romance linguistic continuum.

### 1.1 Aspects of evaluative morphology

Evaluative morphology is a highly expressive yet structurally diverse component of grammar. It encompasses a range of highly language-specific morphological processes, involving various word-formation mechanisms which are typically situated at the intersection of derivation and inflection<sup>1</sup>. From a formal perspective, languages that exhibit evaluative morphology typically rely on a varied set of strategies, including a more or less extensive inventory of affixes – often polyfunctional in nature – alongside word-internal modifications, reduplication, repetition, and, in some cases, analytic constructions. Evaluative morphology carries significant semantic and pragmatic implications. Semantically, as proposed by Grandi (2002), evaluative morphemes operate along two primary axes: quantitative and qualitative. These affixes modify the base meaning by introducing size-related or affective dimensions, often in a scalar and contrastive fashion relative to a lexical default. Pragmatically, evaluative morphology contributes expressive and interactional nuance: diminutives may convey affection, intimacy, or mitigation, while augmentatives and pejoratives can signal emphasis, irony, or contempt. These pragmatic effects are context-sensitive and culturally embedded, underscoring the role of evaluative morphology not only as a semantic modifier but also as a tool of interpersonal stance and discourse management<sup>2</sup>. Indeed,

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<sup>1</sup> The literature on evaluative morphology is massive and cannot be fully listed here. For a comprehensive discussion and references, see Grandi and Körtvélyessy (2015).

<sup>2</sup> See also Merlini Barbaresi (2015), who discusses the intersection of evaluative morphology with pragmatics, including how evaluative affixes contribute to speaker stance and register modulation.

the concept of morphopragmatics was introduced, whose foundation is to examine how evaluative morphology conveys pragmatic functions like affection, irony, and emphasis (Dressler, Merlini Barbaresi 1994).

### 1.2 Evaluative morphology from a language contact perspective

The borrowability of derivational and inflectional morphology has been traditionally considered more resistant to contact than lexical or phonological material. The erosion of (partly) morphological and syntactic structures reflects a level of interference that corresponds to what Thomason and Kaufman (1988, 75–76) describe as “heavy structural borrowing”, resulting from strong cultural pressure exerted by one language on another. This type of contact – the highest on the borrowing scale that hierarchically ranks levels of interference – leads to a structural reconfiguration of the recipient language, affecting all levels of linguistic organization, from phonetics to syntax, and giving rise to profound typological changes. Hence, according to Thomason and Kaufman’s scale of borrowability, derivational and inflectional morphology sits at a mid-level of structural resistance and is typically subject to transfer only under conditions of intense and prolonged bilingualism or language shift.

However, evaluative morphology has been highlighted as a contact-sensitive domain due to its high functional load, its role in in-group discourse, and its emotive and affective salience (Aikhenvald 2006; Matras 2009). Evaluative morphology – particularly diminutives (Seifart 2020) – appears notably susceptible to borrowing, although it does not represent the morphological category most prone to this phenomenon (Gardani 2018). Despite the significance of morphological borrowing, dedicated studies on evaluative morphology from a language contact perspective remain relatively scarce, with the notable exception of Grandi’s (2002) extensive work on the Mediterranean area (see also Grandi 2004). The high degree of variation and diachronic instability that characterizes evaluative morphology – features which render it especially receptive to processes of renewal and innovation (Grandi 2011) – makes it an especially compelling object of study in contact scenarios.

Following Thomason and Kaufman (1988, 34),

We in no way reject, and in fact support, the very widespread view that it is acceptable, appropriate, and even necessary to study the structure of a language abstracted from the circumstances of its use. But however useful this approach might be for some analytic purposes, it has no value for the development of a predictive theory of linguistic interference.

This is the reason why it seems to be necessary to consider the degree of vitality of the language in question in order to consider the contact processes in the investigated area.

### 1.3 Francoprovençal of Apulia

The two small communities in Apulia where Francoprovençal is spoken – Faeto (685 inhabitants) and Celle di San Vito (148 inhabitants) – are particularly noteworthy due

to their geographical location, which places them in discontinuity with other Francoprovençal-speaking communities within the Italian territory. Despite the short distance between Faeto and Celle di San Vito and their shared historical and social background, the sociolinguistic conditions differ significantly. This divergence is primarily due to the differing functional distribution of codes within the linguistic repertoire, speaker language practices, and the degree of permeability between the two Francoprovençal varieties and both Italian and its regional dialects.

The Francoprovençal spoken in this area, which is commonly identified as Faetar and Cellese, experiences different degrees of endangerment according particularly to the speakers' age<sup>3</sup>. In Faeto, the minority variety is widely spoken across all segments of the population, with some exceptions in the lowest layer of speakers' age. The use of Faetar permeates the more intimate domains – such as family and friendships – and is gradually beginning to extend into less informal contexts, thus encroaching on domains that were previously reserved exclusively for Italian. In contrast, in the case of Celle di San Vito, a gradual decline of the minority variety can be observed, together with its replacement by both Italian and the local Italo-Romance dialect. This trend aligns with the default sociolinguistic profile of the minority settings, wherein loyalty to the alloglottic variety tends to be associated primarily with older speakers, rural areas, and employment in the primary sector.

The Francoprovençal spoken in Apulia exhibits a high degree of phonological and lexical variation within its system. Francoprovençal elements often coexist with corresponding forms from Apulian and Southern Italian dialects (Heap, Nagy 1998; Perta 2015; 2017), resulting in multiple variants that are used interchangeably by speakers. Phonologically, the system of Apulian Francoprovençal echoes that of Italian and its regional varieties, particularly in phonotactic constraints. Notably, however, the minority language frequently exhibits final consonant clusters due to the deletion of post-tonic vowels. The reduced vowel schwa – commonly found in unstressed syllables and carrying an uncertain phonological role – resembles its counterparts in neighboring regional Italian dialects. Structural borrowing from Italian into Apulian Francoprovençal is also evident in the presence of geminate consonants and cases of phonosyntactic strengthening. Nonetheless, verbal suffixes, determiners, and plural morphemes remain distinct from their Italian equivalents (Nagy 2000), even though the language has undergone a series of structural influences over the centuries from both Italian and the surrounding Apulian dialect, resulting in forms of interference and morphological innovation.

The typological proximity between Apulian Francoprovençal and Italian with its varieties creates a favorable context for the transfer and integration of morphological material in conditions of intense bilingualism. Nevertheless, due to the shared genealogical origin of the varieties and the partial overlap of their respective inventories of evaluative formatives, determining the precise extent and directionality of such contact-induced morphological influence remains challenging.

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<sup>3</sup> For a longitudinal picture of Faetar vitality see Perta (2024).

## 2. *Studying diminutives in Apulian Francoprovençal*

### 2.1 Methodological premises

If one wants to assess possible changes that may have occurred over time in the domain of evaluative morphology in the Apulian Francoprovençal varieties as a result of language contact with Italian and Italo-Romance dialects, one should not only have a clear picture of the current sets of evaluative formatives of the languages involved, but also of the initial situation. While this is not problematic as far as Italian is concerned, Faetar and Cellese raise a number of problems related to the earliest documentation, involving at least two different aspects.

The first aspect pertains to the chronological depth of the documentation: no matter which hypothesis one accepts about the origin of the Francoprovençal settlement in southern Italy<sup>4</sup>, contact between Apulian Francoprovençal and Italo-Romance varieties dates back to medieval times, whereas the documentation of Apulian Francoprovençal does not begin until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the first concise grammatical descriptions and some transcriptions of texts. Much of the history of Apulian Francoprovençal and its contacts with neighboring varieties remains unknown to us, and what we see described in the early works is already the result of a long-standing contamination (as already noted in the earliest works devoted to this variety)<sup>5</sup>.

The second aspect specifically concerns the amount and quality of information on evaluative morphology contained in works on Faetar and Cellese. Evaluative morphology has a rather marginal position in grammatical descriptions: as will be shown in the following section, early works provide little (though valuable) or no information, while the few modern grammars essentially provide lists of suffixes, with some sporadic semantic observations.

More generally, one should always approach the data provided by grammatical descriptions with caution, carefully considering the type of grammar used and its purposes<sup>6</sup>. In this regard, the two most recent Faetar grammars, as will be argued below, raise some issues that make them perhaps not entirely suitable for our investigation.

In order to evaluate possible contact-induced changes in the Apulian Francoprovençal inventory of evaluative affixes, we will first attempt to recover the earliest accessible phase from our sources. We will also rely on etymological observations and comparison with other Francoprovençal varieties, although these also underwent strong pressure from the Italo-Romance varieties over time.

The evaluation of contemporary data, both those taken from more recent grammars and those collected in our investigation through questionnaires, also requires some meth-

<sup>4</sup> For a brief historical overview, see, e.g., Perta (2024, 204), with references.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., the remark by Francesco Alfonso Perrini at the end of his Cellese translation of Boccaccio's tale I, 9 (Papanti 1875, 173–174): “Il dialetto provenzale ha oggimai perduto molto del suo antico stampo nel mio paesello, e può dirsi che appena ne rimanga una leggiera sfumatura, tanto esso si è immedesimato col nostro linguaggio nazionale. Non pertanto io volli tentare di darne un saggio, benché malagevole fosse di rendere la esattezza del concetto boccaccesco con le frasi di un dialetto ormai corrotto e quasi quasi svanito nel lungo giro de' tempi”.

<sup>6</sup> See also Grandi (2002, 22).

odological premises. In a situation of strong bilingualism in which repertoires are mixed, it may not be easy to measure the actual extent of change. In order to assess the scope of evaluative suffixes and their degree of integration into the Apulian Francoprovençal system, one must first carefully distinguish Italo-Romance loanwords or code-switching phenomena from genuine Francoprovençal forms. Indeed, Italo-Romance evaluative forms, either borrowed – with a greater or lesser degree of lexicalization – or occasionally inserted into utterances as code-switching phenomena, do not provide relevant information about possible changes regarding the Apulian Francoprovençal inventory of evaluative affixes. As long as an evaluative affix only occurs with Italo-Romance bases, it cannot be regarded as part of the Apulian Francoprovençal grammar. The only fairly solid criterion is to look at evaluative affixes compatible with native Francoprovençal bases, although long-standing Italo-Romance loanwords might perhaps be regarded as equal to native bases when assessing the degree of integration of a borrowed morpheme. Of course, this is also not unproblematic, because the evaluation of the nativeness of a base may be complicated by the close relationship between Francoprovençal and Italo-Romance, and one should also consider that phonologically adapted Italo-Romance loanwords may also be difficult to distinguish from native Francoprovençal bases. Therefore, a case-by-case etymological analysis is required to properly evaluate the data.

Given the purpose of this paper, in what follows we will focus the discussion on diminutives, although we will make sporadic observations on other evaluative forms.

## 2.2 Faetar diminutives in grammatical descriptions (late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 21<sup>st</sup> century)

The first comprehensive – though concise – description of Apulian Francoprovençal is the (posthumous) article by Giuseppe Morosi (1890–1892)<sup>7</sup>, in which evaluative morphology is given little space, although some valuable information is provided. According to Morosi (1890–1892, 57), Faetar (and Cellese)<sup>8</sup> preserves some remnants of diminutives in [ˈ-ɯŋ]<sup>9</sup> (< Lat. *-ōn-*), such as [biˈɯŋ] (also [ˈbːjuŋ], Morosi 1890–1892, 74) [calf] (from [ˈbuːə] [ox]) and [tʃaˈruŋ] [small cauldron], and is rather rich in diminutives-augmentatives in [ˈ-ɔ] (< *\*-ott*), like [tʃivˈrɔ] [kid] and [levˈrɔ] [leveret] ([lagaˈrɔ] [puddle] is also found at Morosi 1890–1892, 52, built on an Apulian base). In fn. 1 on the same page, he also mentions the form [kajˈnilː] [piglet], built through the suffix [ˈ-ilː] – labelled as “Apulian” – on the native Apulian Francoprovençal noun [kaˈjuŋ] [pig], thus providing evidence of some degree of morphological integration of a non-native suffix. Plural forms in [ˈ-elːə] can be found in the texts given in the appendix: [puviriˈelːə] [little poor men] (also sg. [pueriˈelːə], Morosi

<sup>7</sup> Sporadic earlier works exist (e.g., Mandalari 1884), but they generally do not provide any description of the language and only include word lists, some sentences, and brief texts, which, however, may provide some useful data.

<sup>8</sup> Since there are very slight differences between the two varieties, Morosi (1890–1892, 34) regards them as essentially the same language, only sporadically mentioning some distinctive features.

<sup>9</sup> We decided to actualize Morosi’s phonetic transcription (as far as it is possible). In his article, he followed the rules established by Ascoli (1873). Inconsistencies in Morosi’s work have not been amended.

1890–1892, 74)<sup>10</sup>, [orfani'el:ə] [little orphans] (Morosi 1890–1892, 71), [u'nel:ə] [(little) skirt], [tia'nel:ə] [(small) pans] (Morosi 1890–1892, 72), all built on Italo-Romance bases (the latter two probably lexicalized). The non-native character of the suffix is assured, because the regular Faetar and Cellese outcome of Lat. *-ellu-* is [-e:j]; see, e.g., [mun'se:j] < Lat. *mōnticēllus* (Morosi 1890–1892, 42; Kattenbusch 1982, 44–45), [tau'rej] < Lat. *taurēllus* (Morosi 1890–1892, 47)<sup>11</sup>.

Although not explicitly mentioned in the morphological section, some diminutives in [-et:(ə)] also occur here and there in Morosi's work; see, e.g., [fi'let:ə] [little daughter] (Morosi 1890–1892, 42), [murti'et:] [little mortar], [ʃanni'let:ə] [little candle], [gji'zet:ə] [small church], [ʃəm'i'zet:ə] [blouse], [ʃjau'et:] / [ʃju'et:] [little son] (Morosi 1890–1892, 46), [ʃjuo'zet:ə] [little thing] (Morosi 1890–1892, 50), [kau'set:ə] [(little) socks] (Morosi 1890–1892, 72). The latter is probably lexicalized, and initial [k] points to an Italo-Romance loanword<sup>12</sup>.

Only a brief mention is given to forms in [-it:ʃ] (Morosi 1890–1892, 45), matching Italo-Romance forms in *-uccio*, such as [kar'tit:ʃ] *quartuccio* [a measure] and [kaʃte'li:t:ʃ] 'Castelluccio' (place name). However, since the regular outcome of the Latin diminutive suffix *-cūlu-* is [-ʌ(:ə)-] in Apulian Francoprovençal<sup>13</sup>, one should regard forms in [-it:ʃ] as Italo-Romance loanwords (Kattenbusch 1982, 125).

Analytic constructions also occur, such as [ʃjauə pə'tin:] [little child] (Morosi 1890–1892, 57). Also note [n ʃev'rə lu 'me pət:ʃe'ril:ə] (Morosi 1890–1892, 74), [a kid the smallest], with the Italo-Romance [pət:ʃe'ril:ə] – built with the diminutive suffix [-il:ə] – intensifying a (lexicalized) diminutive in [-ə].

For the earliest stage we can reach, we currently do not have further data on diminutives. The article by Alfonso de Salvio (1908) only focuses on historical phonology and largely depends on Morosi, so no new data on diminutives are provided. Furthermore, as far as we have seen, no new information can be found in the AIS.

Turning to more recent sources, data on diminutives are also not particularly abundant. The extensive work by Dieter Kattenbusch (1982), although mentioning diminutive forms here and there, does not include a section specifically devoted to evaluative morphology. Conversely, the two most recent Faetar grammars, issued by Naomi Nagy (2000) and the Sportello Linguistico Francoprovenzale (2006b), include brief discussions on evaluative strategies<sup>14</sup>. However, when assessing the data, one should take into account the

<sup>10</sup> Kattenbusch (1982, 94) has [purri'el:ə], while the dictionary by the Sportello Linguistico Francoprovenzale (2006a, 203) [pu'rjel:ə].

<sup>11</sup> Note that the same outcome is also found in some Italo-Romance (Apulian) loanwords adapted in Faetar, e.g., [pule'trej] [donkey], from *puledrello* (Morosi 1890–1892, 65).

<sup>12</sup> See AIS, map 1559, showing similar forms in the Italo-Romance dialects of the surrounding areas (Faeto is point 715).

<sup>13</sup> Forms in [-ʌ(:ə)-] are fully lexicalized in Apulian Francoprovençal and do not have diminutive meaning (see, e.g., [rə'n:uʌ:ə] [frog] < \**ranūcūla*).

<sup>14</sup> As far as Cellese is concerned, we did not find any discussion about evaluative morphology in modern bibliographical sources, and only sporadic diminutive forms, mostly lexicalized, are included in the glossary found in Martino 2011.

peculiar character of these grammars. On one hand, Nagy's grammar is "a grammar of the way people speak in Faeto, and no effort is made to separate out Italian, Apulian regional varieties, and 'true' Faetar forms" (Nagy 2000, 5); on the other hand, the grammar issued by the Sportello Linguistico is expressly modeled on Italian grammars (Sportello Linguistico Francoprovenzale 2006b, XVIII), so one should consider the possibility of a marked influence of Italian structures in the description of Faetar.

As far as diminutives are concerned, according to Nagy (2000, 105), the most common suffixes are [-il], [-in], and [-et] (but some others occur in the examples)<sup>15</sup>. Looking at the data, one may also observe some cases of competition between diminutive forms, particularly, [kava'lutʃ] and [kava'lot] for [colt] (Nagy 2000, 105, same speaker) and [ma'nun] and [ma'ninə] for 'little hand' (Nagy 2000, 106, same speaker).

Nagy's observations are consistent with those included in the grammar by the Sportello Linguistico Francoprovenzale (2006b, 59–60), which lists [ˈinə], [ˈil:ə], [ˈe/et:ə], and [ˈe/el:ə] as the most common suffixes to form diminutives. No further observations are made in this work.

Before summarizing the scenario we assume as a starting point for our analysis, we will complement the picture sketched here by having a look at data on diminutives from other Francoprovençal areas.

### 2.3 A brief look at diminutives in other Francoprovençal varieties

Although a comprehensive analysis of evaluative morphology in non-Apulian Francoprovençal varieties falls beyond the scope of this paper, we decided to include here a brief discussion on diminutives in these varieties, which may support the observations made for Faetar and Cellese. For these data, we essentially rely on the study by Przemysław Dębowiak (2014), also summarizing previous bibliography, which, for the Arpitan domain, does not include data on the Francoprovençal varieties of Faeto and Celle di San Vito.

According to Dębowiak (2014, 143–146), the most frequent and productive diminutive suffixes are *-on* and *-è(t)*. Their distribution varies slightly across different areas (*-on* is prevalent in Forez, while the use of *-è(t)* increases towards the northeast), and in some cases they take on a lexicalized form. Other suffixes include *-oulo*, only productive in some dialects of Savoy and lexicalized elsewhere; *-in*, especially in Aosta Valley, Valais, and Savoy, probably due to Italian influence; *-at*, especially in Forez, with pejorative meaning; *-ot*, quite rare. Analytical constructions are also possible, and their frequency varies according to the different dialects.

As a final remark, one should mention that the picture could be perhaps further refined considering the oldest Francoprovençal dialects, also in light of the hypotheses on the or-

<sup>15</sup> From a semantic point of view, Nagy (2000, 105) observes that some diminutive forms show a "lexicalized unpredictable meaning", based on some elicited derivative forms of [ˈvest(ə)] [dress]. However, one should note that [v(ɛ/ə)s'titə] [man's suit] – although indicated as feminine – probably should not be analyzed as v(ɛ/ə)st+itə, but as a loanword from Italian *vestito*, same meaning, which is not a diminutive. All the other derivatives mentioned display a clear diminutive (or, more generally, evaluative) nuance.

igin of the Apulian Francoprovençal varieties. Indeed, based on historical phonology, de Salvio (1908) suggested that Apulian Francoprovençal shows the closest similarities to the Old Lyonnese and the dialect of the Northern Dauphiné of the Middle Ages. Melillo (1959) roughly reached the same conclusion (although with much more solid arguments and criticizing those by de Salvio), identifying the area covering almost all of Isère, Ain, and the eastern border of Rhône as the one linguistically closest to the varieties of Faeto and Celle di San Vito. Schüle (1978, 135–139), while rejecting some of Melillo's arguments, strengthened his hypothesis providing further lexical evidence. Nevertheless, a full assessment of these hypotheses cannot be carried out within the limited space available in this article, nor could a thorough analysis of medieval Francoprovençal data be feasible here<sup>16</sup>.

#### 2.4 An outline of the starting point of our analysis

Before moving to the data we have collected on contemporary Faetar and Cellese, we summarize in this section the situation on diminutives in Apulian Francoprovençal as it can be gleaned from bibliographic sources, with the caveat that, given the limited data available, it is not feasible to fully assess the actual productivity of each suffix for the earliest stage.

The original diminutive suffix [¹-un], from Lat. *-ōn-*, must have been quite productive in the past, but it appears to be a relic by the time of the first attestations of Faetar and Cellese, and seems to be suffering from some competition from other strategies. Conversely, the suffix seems to be still productive in the other Francoprovençal varieties. Today, the suffix [¹-un(:ə)] productively builds augmentative forms in Apulian Francoprovençal<sup>17</sup>, probably under the influence of Italian *-one*, from the same Latin base as the Francoprovençal diminutive suffix<sup>18</sup>, which may explain the loss of productivity of [¹-un] as a diminutive suffix.

The suffix in *-tt-* is of unclear origin (perhaps Celtic)<sup>19</sup>. Since the earliest documentation, it has occurred with both Francoprovençal and Italo-Romance bases in the two forms [¹-ɔ] and [¹-et:(ə)], the latter apparently being more frequent and plausibly more productive, as it still is in the other Francoprovençal varieties. The Italo-Romance suffix *-etto* is generally not found in the dialects of southern Italy, where the suffix *-ello* predominates (Rohlf's 1969, 453–454), which suggests it could be regarded as native.

The non-native suffixes [¹-il:] and [¹-el:], which originate from southern Italo-Romance varieties<sup>20</sup>, although mostly occurring in a number of Italo-Romance loanwords, are also sporadically added to Francoprovençal bases since the earliest records, thus probably being

<sup>16</sup> Works we have been able to consult so far (e.g., Devaux 1892; Philippon 1901; Horiot 1972) do not provide specific information on diminutives in medieval Francoprovençal varieties. Texts, as far as we have seen, provide some diminutive forms, but we still did not attempt a systematic survey of the entire medieval Francoprovençal corpus.

<sup>17</sup> See Nagy (2000, 106) and Sportello *Linguistico Francoprovenzale* (2006b, 59).

<sup>18</sup> The suffix shows diminutive meaning in Gallo-Romance varieties and Catalan, while it is generally augmentative in Italo-Romance and Ibero-Romance languages (Dębowski 2014, 66), except for some areas under French influence (Rohlf's 1969, 416–417).

<sup>19</sup> See Hasselrot (1957, 9–43) and Rohlf's (1969, 452–453).

<sup>20</sup> See Rohlf's (1969, 402–404) and Dębowski (2014, 51–54) for a comprehensive account of the Latin origin of these suffixes and their variants.

a rather early example of suffix borrowing. Consistently with its local origin, it is not surprising that it is absent in the other Francoprovençal varieties.

As far as can be seen from Morosi's article (as well as more recent works), original Latin diminutives in *-ūlus* and *-cūlus* only occur as lexicalized forms, and the suffixes seemingly have no productive diminutive function in Apulian Francoprovençal. See, e.g., [ˈpʊm:ələ] [apple] < Lat. *pōmūla* (Morosi 1890–1892, 43), [au'reʎə] [ear] < Lat. *auricūla* (Morosi 1890–1892, 49). Sporadic Italo-Romance loanwords in [-it:ʃ] occur.

The same is true for (late) Latin diminutives in *-(c)īnus* in the earliest phase: cf., e.g., [pɪ'd:ʒɪŋ] [chick] < Lat. *pūllīcīnus* (Morosi 1890–1892, 46; [pɪ'd:ʒɪŋ] in Kattenbusch 1982, 71). Diminutives in [-in(ə)] are virtually non-existent in the earliest Apulian Francoprovençal documentation. However, [-in(ə)] is currently listed among the most productive suffixes forming diminutives in the more recent grammatical descriptions of Faetar, which seems to imply suffix borrowing, although all the forms listed in the grammars by Nagy and the Sportello Linguistico are probably Italian loanwords<sup>21</sup>. Note that, since the suffix *-ino* does not typically carry a diminutive meaning in southern Italy (Rohlf 1969, 412), the model for such loanwords should probably be Italian rather than some southern Italo-Romance dialect, which may also explain the absence of diminutives in [-in(ə)] in Morosi's data set.

Finally, analytic strategies with both native [pə'tin:] / [pə'ti:(t:ə)] and Italo-Romance [pət:ʃe'ril:ə] are attested since the earliest documentation, but the limited data available do not allow for an assessment of their diffusion compared to synthetic forms with suffixes. In this respect, we did not find any data about the other Francoprovençal varieties.

This (tentative) reconstruction of the diachronic development from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 2000s is the picture we assume as the starting point of our analysis.

### 3. Methodology and sample

#### 3.1 Methodology

The data used to analyze diminutives were collected through semi-guided and guided language production by speakers from Faeto and Celle di San Vito, who belonged to different age groups and had different socio-demographic backgrounds.

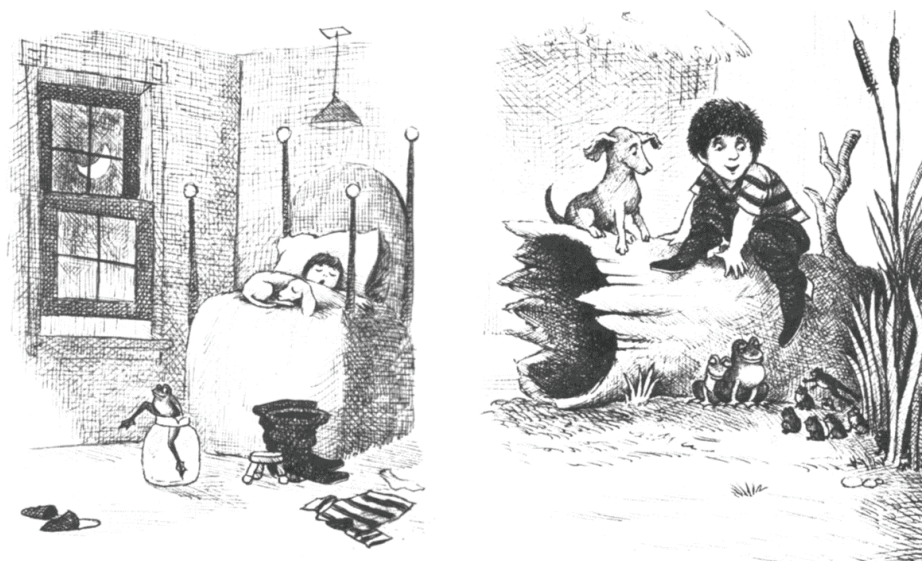
The participants were asked to perform two tasks: the telling of the Frog Story (Mayer 1969), to elicit freer production, and the translation task from Italian, to elicit a more guided result<sup>22</sup>.

The Frog Story proved to be an effective tool for eliciting diminutives, particularly in the two pages of the story shown below:

<sup>21</sup> In Nagy (2000, 105–106) one finds [vəs'tin(ə)] [little dress], [vəs'tin(o)] [little dress for girl], [frarə'lin] [little brother], [ma'ninə] [little hand] (beside native [ma'nun]), [lɪbrə'tʃɪn] [libretto (mus.)]; in Sportello Linguistico Francoprovenzale (2006b, 59), [bus'tinə] [small bag], [tʃəpu'li:nə] [small onion], [mbrə'l:i:nə] [small umbrella], [ʃkar'pinə] [small shoe].

<sup>22</sup> Data collection took place from June 2024 to July 2025.

Figure 1 - Pictures from the Frog Story (Mayer 1969, 2 and 23)



As for the second task, the following sentences were given to the informants for translation:

- *Passo le vacanze in una cittadina abruzzese.*  
[I spend the holidays in a small town in Abruzzo.]
- *Quei cagnolini e quei gattini stanno a casa sua.*  
[Those puppies and kittens are at his place.]
- *C'era una porticina aperta lì, ma non c'era nessuno.*  
[There was a small open door, but nobody was there.]
- *Il fiumiciattolo nel bosco è molto carino.*  
[The small river in the woods is very nice.]

### 3.2 Sample

The sample in Faeto comprised 29 people (17 women and 12 men) as summarized in Table 1:

Table 1 - Interviewees in Faeto

	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
<i>Age bracket 1</i>	10-19	1	-
<i>Age bracket 2</i>	20-39	3	5
<i>Age bracket 3</i>	40-59	2	5
<i>Age bracket 4</i>	60-79	6	7

The sample in Celle di San Vito comprised 20 people (14 women and 6 men), as shown in Table 2:

Table 2 - Interviewees in Celle di San Vito

	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
<i>Age bracket 1</i>	10–19	–	–
<i>Age bracket 2</i>	20–39	1	6
<i>Age bracket 3</i>	40–59	4	5
<i>Age bracket 4</i>	60–79	1	3

#### 4. Analysis

##### 4.1 Faeto

##### 4.1.1 Frog Story

When looking at the pictures of the Frog Story, all of the informants used diminutive forms of words (little frog, little child, small stool, small webbed foot, etc.).

Below are some examples provided by them<sup>23</sup>:

- (1) [...] *assett-à n'facce u lje a-gn-atte un quatra-cch-jòtte*<sup>24</sup>.  
 sit-PTCP in front of at bed there is a.M boy-DIM1-DIM2  
 [...] [There's a little boy sitting by the bed.]
- (2) [...] *i sagli-ùnte pure le rennùglje peccerèlle*.  
 they go\_out-PRS.3PL also the.ART.F.PL frog small  
 [...] [and also the small frogs came out.]
- (3) *I ante de chjù lo fiàue peccerille*.  
 they have-PRS.3PL of more the.ART.M.PL child small  
 [They even have the small children.]
- (4) *Gl-éste assett-à 'nghiocche na seggi-ul-elle peccerèlle*.  
 he be-PRS.1SG sit-PTCP over a.F chair-DIM1-DIM2 small  
 [He's sitting on a small chair.]

The data has made it possible to collect a variety of diminutive forms, which are either synthetic or analytic, or sometimes both. This is summarized in Table 3:

<sup>23</sup> Specifically, examples 1 and 2 have been elicited by two female informants from Age bracket 2 and Age bracket 3 respectively; example 3 by a male informant from Age bracket 3; example 4 by a female informant from Age bracket 4.

<sup>24</sup> The orthography used here is that codified by the Sportello Linguistico Francoprovenzale of Faeto in its 2006 grammar and dictionary.

Table 3 - *Diminutives from the Frog Story in Faeto*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Synthetic</i>	<i>Analytic</i>
Little boy	<i>quatracchjòtte</i> [kwatra'k:jt:ə]	
Little child		<i>'nfanne peccerille</i> [əŋ'fan:ə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Little frog	<i>ranucchjètte</i> [ranu'k:jet:ə]	<i>rennùglja peccerille</i> [rə'n:uʎ:a pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Small chair	<i>sèggiule / seggiulèlle</i> [səd:ʒulə] / [səd:ʒu'lel:ə]	<i>seggiulèlle peccerille</i> [səd:ʒu'lel:ə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Little girl	<i>figljettèlle / figljètte</i> [fiʎ:ə't:el:ə] / [fi'ʎ:et:ə]	
Little sheep	<i>pecurúcce</i> [pəku'rut:ʃə]	
Small table	<i>taulíne</i> [tau'li:nə]	
Small toad	<i>ruspettièlle</i> [ruspə't:jel:ə]	
Little hawk	<i>falcunétte</i> [falku'net:ə]	
House sparrow	<i>passarjèlle</i> [pas:a'rjel:ə]	
Small room	<i>ciambrette</i> [tʃam'bret:ə]	
Webbed foot	<i>rambettèlle</i> [rambə't:el:ə]	
Little children		<i>fiàue peccerille</i> [fja:wə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]

As can be seen, the informants use different diminutive forms, most of which are created synthetically using suffixes. In fewer cases, the adjective 'little/small' is added, creating analytic forms.

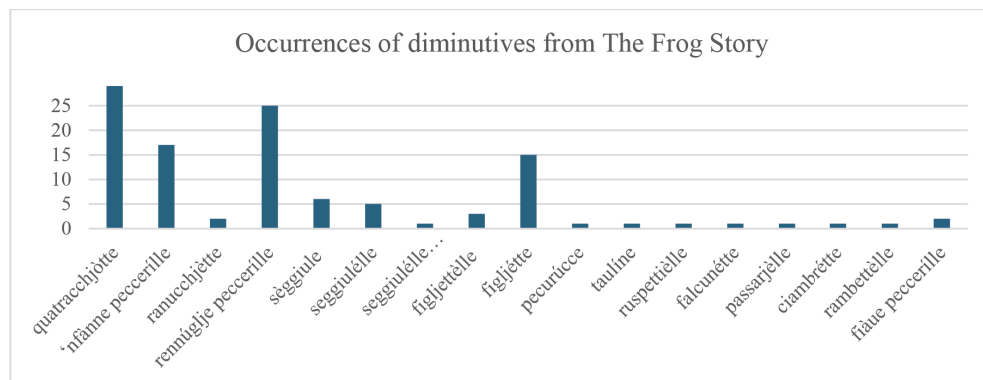
The suffixes *-èlle* (used in five words) and *-étte* (used in four words) appear to be the most prevalent; the former can even modify forms that are already diminutive, such as *figlje* > *figljètte* > *figljettèlle*.

The analytic form with *peccerille* is used less frequently than the synthetic pattern. However, it also appears with words that are already diminutive, such as *seggiulèlle peccerille* [small chair], perhaps to emphasize the smallness of the object or because in some cases the synthetic diminutive has now become a lexicalized word.

Some synthetic words are clearly loanwords from Italian or Italo-Romance varieties, such as *ranucchjètte* and *taulíne*, which sometimes replace the Factor diminutive forms (*rennùglje peccerille* and *buffettjèlle* respectively).

As for the number of occurrences, Figure 2 summarizes the number of people who have actually used each form:

Figure 2 - Number of occurrences from *The Frog Story* in Faeto



As visible in Figure 2, not everyone used the same diminutive forms while telling the Frog Story. This does not mean that they do not know or utilize the forms, they simply did not make use of them in that specific elicitation task. While words like *quatrachjòtte* and *rennùglje peccerille* were used by all the speakers or the majority of them, other forms were used differently by the speakers.

For example, a female informant from Age bracket 4 used four types of diminutives that no one else used. She further emphasized the diminutive *seggiulèlle* by placing the adjective *peccerille* alongside it, while also using *seggiulèlle* on its own. Additionally, she used *pecurúcce* and *falcunétte* because she mistook the dog and the little owl for other animals (a small sheep and a small falcon, respectively). She then referred to the frog's webbed foot as *rambettèlle*.

One male informant from Age bracket 4 was the only one who used *ciambrette* to refer to the child's bedroom, while all the other informants used the word *ciambre*.

As for the synthetic form *ranucchjette* [little frog], it was used by two female informants belonging to Age brackets 3 and 4, however alongside the analytic form *rennùglje peccerille*.

#### 4.1.2 Translation task

For each Italian diminutive in the sentences of the translation task, the expected Faetar form is given below:

- *cittadina* [small town] → *paije*
- *cagnolini* [puppies] → *zullitte*
- *gattini* [kittens] → *muscille*
- *porticina* [small door] → *purteccèlle*
- *fiumiciatolo* [small river] → *uallóne / uallúne / canà*

The interviewees used the following diminutives when translating the provided sentences, as illustrated in Table 4:

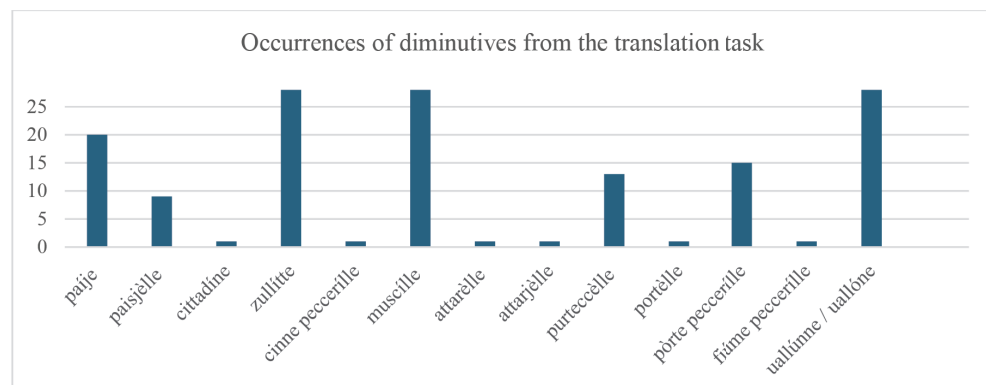
Table 4 - *Diminutives from the task translation in Faeto*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Synthetic</i>	<i>Analytic</i>
Small town	<i>paije</i> / <i>paisjèlle</i> / <i>cittadine</i> [pa'i:jə] / [paj'sjɛ:lə] / [tʃit:a di:nə]	
Puppies	<i>zullitte</i> [tsu'li:tə]	<i>cinne peccerille</i> [ˈtʃin:ə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Kittens	<i>muscille</i> / <i>attarèlle</i> / <i>attarjèlle</i> [mu'ʃil:ə] / [ʉat:a'rɛ:l:ə] / [ʉat:a'rjɛ:l:ə]	
Small door	<i>purteccèlle</i> / <i>portèlle</i> [purtə't:ʃɛ:l:ə] / [por'tɛ:l:ə]	<i>pòrta peccerille</i> [ˈpɔrta pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Small river	<i>uallón(n)e</i> / <i>uallún(n)e</i> / <i>canàle</i> [wa'l:ɔnə] / [wa'l:unə] / [ka'na:lə]	<i>fiúme peccerille</i> [ˈfju:mə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]

Similar to the Frog Story, the results of the translation task show that most forms are synthetic and end in *-èlle*. The words *zullitte* and *muscille* are undoubtedly loanwords from surrounding Italo-Romance varieties. There are some occurrences of the analytic form, but these were all used by the interviewees because they could not remember the corresponding word.

The word *uallúne* (or *uallóne*) is interesting, as it is probably a lexicalized form of the word *uàlle* (meaning [valley]) combined with the old Faetar diminutive *-úne*, which is now used as an augmentative due to pervasive contact with Italian and Italo-Romance varieties.

Figure 3 shows the number of occurrences of the above-mentioned forms:

Figure 3 - *Number of occurrences from the translation task in Faeto*

Even here, not all the informants used the same diminutives. For example, for the word 'small village', most speakers used the word 'village' without making it diminutive. Two informants used the words *attarèlle* and *attarjèlle* to refer to kittens, but they claimed these words to be from the dialect of Castelluccio Valmaggiore (a neighboring village where

Francoprovençal is not spoken). One male informant from Age bracket 2 utilized *fiúme peccerille* to indicate a small river because he did not remember the word ‘river’ in his language; however, the other informants did not use a diminutive, but the word *uallóne* (or its variants) or *canàle* [channel].

## 4.2 Celle di San Vito

### 4.2.1 Frog Story

Similarly to the interviewees in Facto, those in Celle di San Vito also made wide use of diminutives when recounting the Frog Story.

Here are some examples provided by the informants<sup>25</sup>:

- (5) [...] *a-j-ante un quatra-cch-jòtte e na ranócchje.*  
 there are a.M boy-DIM1-DIM2 and a.F frog  
 [...] [there are a child and a little frog.]
- (6) *Sétte ‘nfanne pettije i remíre na rennúglja pettítte.*  
 this child small he see-PRS.3SG a.F frog small  
 [This little child is looking at a little frog.]
- (7) [...] *‘nfacce u lije a-j-atte un taul-en-étte.*  
 in front of at bed there is a table-DIM1-DIM2  
 [...] [in front of the bed there is a table.]

The patterns found are similar to those of their neighboring Francoprovençal speakers, albeit with some minor differences, as shown in Table 5:

Table 5 - *Diminutives from the Frog Story in Celle di San Vito*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Synthetic</i>	<i>Analytic</i>
Little boy	<i>quatracchjòtte / scazzuóppele</i> [kwatra'k:jɔ:tə] / [ʃka't:swop:ələ]	
Little child		<i>‘nfanne pettije / ‘nfanne peccerille</i> [əŋ'fan:ə pət'i:i:jə] / [əŋ'fan:ə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Little frog	<i>ranócchje</i> [ra'nok:jə]	<i>rennúglja pettítte</i> [rə'n:uʎ:a pət'i:t:ə]
Small chair	<i>seggiulélle</i> [səd:ʒu'lel:ə]	<i>séggia peccerélle</i> ['sed:ʒa pət:ʃə'rel:ə]
Little girl	<i>figljétte / figljóle</i> [fi'ʎ:t:tə] / [fi'ʎ:o:lə]	

<sup>25</sup> The examples provided were extracted by the Frog Story told by informants belonging to Age brackets 2, 3, and 4 respectively.

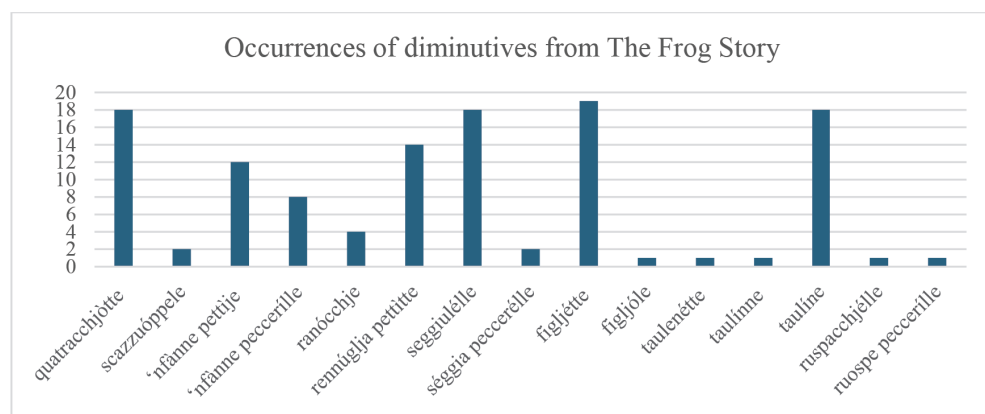
<i>Item</i>	<i>Synthetic</i>	<i>Analytic</i>
Small table	<i>taulenétte / taulinne / tauline</i> [tawlə'net:ə] / [taw'li:n:ə] / [taw'li:nə]	
Small toad	<i>ruspacchjèlle</i> [ruʃpa'k:je:lə]	<i>ruospe peccerille</i> [ˈrwoʃpə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]

Much like Faetar speakers, the informants from Celle di San Vito use various diminutive forms though there are more cases of analytic forms when compared to the corresponding item in Faetar.

Specifically, the suffixes *-elle* and *-étte* are used in Celle di San Vito as well, whereas the analytic form is made with either *pettije* or *peccerille*. Nevertheless, there seem to be more loanwords from Italian or Italo-Romance varieties.

As for the number of occurrences, Figure 4 summarizes how many people have actually used each form:

Figure 4 - Number of occurrences from *The Frog Story* in Celle di San Vito



#### 4.2.2 Translation task

For each Italian diminutive present in the sentences of the translation task, these *Cegljàje* forms were expected:

- *cittadina* [small town] → *paìje*
- *cagnolini* [puppies] → *zullitte*
- *gattini* [kittens] → *vattarjèlle / muscille*
- *porticina* [small door] → *purteccèlle*
- *fiumiciattolo* [small river] → *jumàre / canà*

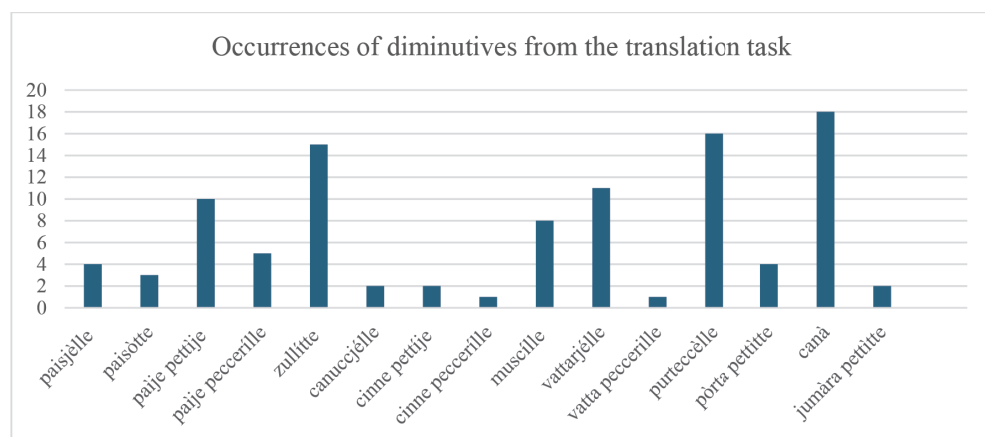
Even here, the informants made use of different diminutives, as shown in Table 6:

Table 6 - *Diminutives from the translation task in Celle di San Vito*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Synthetic</i>	<i>Analytic</i>
Small town	<i>paisjèlle</i> / <i>paisòtte</i> [paj'sjɛl:ə] / [paj'sɔt:ə]	<i>paije pettije</i> / <i>paije peccerille</i> [pa'i:jə pə'ti:jə] / [pa'i:jə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Puppies	<i>zullitte</i> / <i>canuccjèlle</i> [tsu'li:t:ə] / [kanu't:ʃjɛl:ə]	<i>cinne pettije</i> / <i>cinne peccerille</i> [tʃin:ə pə'ti:jə] / [tʃin:ə pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Kittens	<i>muscille</i> / <i>vattarjèlle</i> [mu'ʃil:ə] / [vat:a'rjel:ə]	<i>vatta peccerille</i> [vat:a pət:ʃə'ril:ə]
Small door	<i>purteccèlle</i> [purtə't:ʃɛl:ə]	<i>pòrta pettite</i> [pòrta pə'ti:t:ə]
Small river	<i>canà</i> [ka'na]	<i>jumàra pettite</i> [ju'ma:ra pə'ti:t:ə]

As in the Frog Story, the results from the translation task show a greater use of analytic forms compared to Faeto. Most of the synthetic forms are loanwords from surrounding Italo-Romance varieties or diminutives of Italo-Romance words.

Figure 5 shows the number of occurrences of the above-mentioned forms:

Figure 5 - *Number of occurrences from the translation task in Celle di San Vito*

As in Faeto and in the previous task, not everyone used the same diminutive forms. Moreover, it appears that in Celle di San Vito more forms are used, some of them apparently autochthonous, others clearly an outcome of pervasive contact with Italian and Italo-Romance varieties, such as *paisjèlle* or *canuccjèlle*. Two informants (one from Age bracket 2 and the other from Age bracket 3) used the *jumàra pettite* because they did not remember the word for 'small river' (namely *canà*). A co-occurrence of the adjectives *pettije* and *peccerille* is also detected.

### 5. Conclusion: *What change can be observed?*

The analysis of the data shows two recurring morphological patterns in the Francoprovençal varieties under investigation. Firstly, both Faetar and Cellese exhibit an increased use of the synthetic diminutive suffixes *-ille* / *-elle* / *-èlle*, which appear to have been borrowed from Italian and other Italo-Romance varieties. This suffix displays productive use with both Francoprovençal lexical bases and Italo-Romance ones. These forms have progressively substituted the Francoprovençal diminutive suffix *-ine*, which is now restricted to augmentative functions, paralleling the function observed in Italo-Romance languages. The productivity of the newly adopted suffixes is further evidenced by their occurrence in suffix cumulation, where it appears in final position, as in *purt-ecc-èlle* or *figlj-ett-èlle*, which, if not pointing to the lexicalization of the bases, may show at least the higher degree of functionality of this suffix compared to the others.

Secondly, synthetic and analytic diminutive constructions co-occur in both varieties. There is a clear tendency to use analytic evaluative constructions with *peccerille* (from Italo-Romance), both with Italo-Romance lexical bases (e.g., *fiùme peccerille* [small river]) and with Francoprovençal bases (e.g., *cinne peccerille* [small dog]), including in contexts where it serves to re-determine already diminutive synthetic forms (e.g., *seggiulèlle peccerille* [little chair]). These uses raise questions regarding lexicalization versus mere emphatic reinforcement.

It is worth noticing that in Celle di San Vito speakers prefer to use different analytic constructions. The former is made of noun + *pettije*, a Francoprovençal old construction which is not used in Faeto anymore, and the latter common to both varieties with noun + *peccerille* in a higher degree than in Faeto.

The current situation, as evidenced by the data presented, does not differ significantly from the scenario described by Morosi at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, from which emerges that, in addition to the persistence of residual formations employing various native suffixes, there was a noticeably increasing use of the Italo-Romance suffix *-ille* / *-elle*, which appears to be the most productive diminutive marker in contemporary usage.

A more recent development – one that appears to be absent from Morosi's observations – is the emergence of diminutives in *-ine*, which are attested both in the most up-to-date grammatical descriptions and in our data. This innovation clearly reflects the influence of Italian; however, caution is warranted in determining the precise nature of the contact-induced phenomenon. The available evidence suggests that these *-ine* diminutives consistently involve Italian lexical bases, probably indicating that the phenomenon is currently limited to lexical borrowing. At this stage, there is no indication of morphological borrowing or productive integration of the suffix *-ine* into Faetar morphology.

Another trend may concern the increasing use of analytic strategies as opposed to synthetic, suffix-based formations. Nevertheless, due to the extremely limited documentation from the earliest stages of the language, it is not currently possible to evaluate the significance of this shift with any certainty.

Overall, the available data suggest that the contact-induced convergence between Apulian Francoprovençal and southern Italo-Romance varieties (particularly Apulian) had already reached a relatively stable configuration by the time of the earliest documented

attestations of Apulian Francoprovençal, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequent developments are primarily associated with the introduction of a new, prestigious linguistic variety – Italian – which has begun to exert influence on the already contact-affected local variety. However, at least with regard to diminutives, there is no evidence to date of substantial grammatical restructuring as a result of this contact.

Overall, this case confirms that evaluative morphology is not an impermeable domain: under certain conditions, it can be restructured according to exogenous models, particularly when these are perceived as “natural”, “more expressive”, or socially prestigious. In this sense, Apulian Francoprovençal confirms that language contact could be extended to a productive morphological core of the language. Indeed, these examples illustrate not only the adoption of exogenous morphemes, but also their reorganization within the Francoprovençal system, resulting in hybrid forms. However, the analysis of the results further reveals that Faeto and Celle di San Vito display similar patterns with respect to the variation in the analyzed morphological area. There are some particularly striking results. The first one is the role of speaker age: the informants analyzed did not show significant differences based on age group, challenging the general assumption that younger speakers are more prone to contact-induced change<sup>26</sup>.

The two communities, despite differences in their respective repertoires, do not show divergences in speaker production with respect to contact-induced variation in the area of evaluative morphology. From the degree of shift in Celle di San Vito, one might expect to find a high degree of lexical variation as an intermediate stage toward the replacement of the minority language by Italian and the local Italo-Romance dialect. However, the data show that variation is equally present in contexts where the minority language is still in good health. Moreover, it is striking that the autochthonous analytic construction, made of noun + *pettije*, is used in a community where the shift to Italian and the local Italo-Romance variety is almost complete. This contrasts with Faeto, where the construction has disappeared, even though it is possible to recognize a case of healthy bilingualism.

One possible explanation – drawing on Chambers (1992), Nagy (2011), and Perta (2015) – is that evidence of language change is more visible in the early stages of contact, as the process tends to unfold more rapidly at that time. Such evidence would be particularly detectable not only at the lexical level but also in the area of evaluative morphology where variation between codes and, in some cases, outright lexical replacement in favor of an Italo-Romance diasystem member may have occurred during the initial phases of contact between Italo-Romance and Francoprovençal. Today, in both Faeto and Celle di San Vito, contact-induced processes may have slowed relative to those early stages. If this is the case, the absence of significant differences between age groups could be explained by the fact that the pace of change is now too gradual to be captured within the timeframe of four generations.

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<sup>26</sup> Similar findings were reported by Nagy (2011) and Perta (2015), who, in their study of lexical variation, also observed no significant differences between age groups. This confirms what Bayard (1989) showed, namely that lexical innovation occurs across generations, among both younger and older speakers.

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